Dick Smith Electronics Pty Ltd

COMPUT

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TOSHIBA T1100

Since our last issue, DSE has chosen to market the revolutionary Toshiba T1100, an IBM compatible lap-top computer, throughout Australia. The lightweight, 4.1kg battery-powered machine was selected following an extensive investigation of portable computers which would extend the company's activities in the computer market. DSE packages the T1100 with Access Four, a personal productivity software package from Software Products International, the developer of the famous Open Access.

Through DSE, this software and T1100 package is a world's first release.
The T1100 is the first lap-top with IBM compatibility and the functionality of a desktop computer, at an affordable price.

Selling price of the T1100 and Access Four package is $2,995. This represents a major breakthrough when the capabilities of the T1100 are taken into account. The machine has 256K RAM and an integrated 720K, 3.5 inch floppy disk drive. It also supports an optional, external 3.5 or 5.25 inch floppy disk drive.

The T1100 will run for up to 8 hours under rechargeable battery power and has optional AC adaptor for mains power. The computer can run all the popular IBM PC programs.

The software package incorporates a diary planner, business card directory, graphics, spreadsheet and calculator functions. The machine incorporates a low energy consumption LCD screen or can be connected to a video monitor. The T1100 will be sold through the Dick Smith Electronics network of 51 stores across Australia, with hardware support being provided by Toshiba's service network.

The designation of a separate area in each DSE store, called Computerstop, is evidence of the increasing contribution of business computer systems to the company's total business.

Sales of business computers have totalled many thousands of units in the last twelve months. Encouraged by this success, DSE has set up extensive support and training departments.

The support department handles telephone hotline and written enquires as well as marketing support to the retail outlets.

The training department is responsible for the training of retail staff and has also established affiliations with independent organisations for end-user training.

DSE expects the lap-top computer to further their expansion into the competitive computer market.

ACCESS FOUR

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INTRODUCING ACCESS FOUR

By Ray Lo
Computer Support Manager

ACCESS FOUR is a new software product that is bundled with the Toshiba T1100 portable computer. It's supplied on two 3.5 inch disks and is produced by Software Products International, the creators of the popular Open Access package. Distribution is through Software Suppliers. The name, Access Four, is derived from the four modules of which the program consists — Spreadsheet, 3D graphics, Test Editor and Information Manager.

ACCESS FOUR can replace many of the items commonly found in any office. The major new features of this program are the desk functions; scientific calculator, diary/appointment calendar, clock with local and two other time zones, stop watch, overseas currency rate calculator, business card file, etc.

ACCESS FOUR will be in direct competition with the popular LOTUS 1. 2. 3. It gives you benefits which are not available on other integrated packages, such as:

1. It offers all the features mentioned yet requires less memory (256K bytes of RAM are all that's needed which is the standard memory with the Toshiba T1100)

2. ACCESS FOUR is far more useful because it offers the extra desk function features, described above, within the program. They can be accessed at any time, even when you're in the middle of financial modelling, allowing more of what you want from a computer —convenience!

3. The program has 'pop-up' windows to explain briefly to the user what each command will do and a further help function will generate another window to display a list of function keys and specially assigned control keys. Future software releases from 'Software Suppliers' will be compatible with ACCESS FOUR for example; a full word processor, communication package and much more!

SPREADSHEET

The size of the ACCESS FOUR spreadsheet can be up to an incredible 216 x 3000 cells, this allows for consolidation and linking of models. For example, numerical data can be specifically co-ordinated in a number of spreadsheet models that can be totalled up and the resulting data then displayed in a separate table. Other features in this spreadsheet include, 'Topological Recalculation' (it determines in which order calculations need to be handled) and 'Goal Seeking' which provides for nominating the desired results by having the spreadsheet work backwards to determine the required values of up to 5 input variables.

The spreadsheet also allows graphs to be inserted into program windows. Text, numeric and graphics can be output to a large selection of printers and plotters. A date time function is included which is independent of the system date and time function. I was informed by the supplier that ACCESS FOUR contains even more mathematic and business functions than OPEN ACCESS.

GRAPHICS

The graphics module of ACCESS FOUR includes bar charts, line graphs, scatter and pie charts. The data can be used to provide 3 dimensional bar charts or 2 dimensional overlay and simple form.

If an RGB colour monitor is connected to the Toshiba T1100 computer the representation of graphics can be greatly improved because of the colour content.

Finally, the graphs can be saved for use in documents, presented in spreadsheets or assembled into a carousel for sequential viewing as a slide show. With the 'view command', the graph can be adjusted to suit the user. Different colours, edges or shading of the graphs can be customised and the resultant changes displayed on a test graph so their effect can be seen.

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BENEFITS TO TOSHIBA T1100 OWNERS

Toshiba T1100 MSDOS includes a program called VDISK.SYS (VIRTUAL DISK or RAM DISK Utility Program), which allows users to turn some of the unused portion of RAM into a memory disk drive. Users with a total of 512K RAM (with optional 256K RAM board fitted) will derive the most benefit from this by creating a 360K RAM disk, and still have 152K remaining to run programs. If the program requires more memory to run, then the size of the RAM disk will have to be reduced.

Another little trick is to include the statement COUNTRY=044 in your setup. Then the DOS date will be in the format DD/MM/YY instead of the American MM/DD/YY. Directory listings will reflect this change.

To set up the RAM disk, configure the system (using CONFIG.SYS) as follows:

```
A> COPY CON: CONFIG.SYS <ret>
COUNTRY=044 <ret>
DEVICE=VDISK.SYS 360 128 64
<ret>
 Z (obtained by pressing F6) <ret>
```

The file CONFIG.SYS will be written to disk.

NOTE: 360 represents 360K RAM Disk
128 represents 128 byte sectors (normal disk sector size)
64 represents 64 directory files

When booting up, DOS will read the CONFIG.SYS file and automatically allocate 360K to the RAM disk, calling it Drive C:. For users who have only the standard 256K memory, a RAM disk of 128K can still be used.

NOTE: Access Four requires 256K to run. Therefore 512K memory is required to use a RAM disk in conjunction with Access Four, and the RAM disk must be limited to 256K

Advantages of using a RAM (Virtual) Disk.

1. As the Toshiba T1100 is a single drive system (in its unexpanded state), it is quite cumbersome backing up selected files to another disk without an external disk drive.
RAM Disk comes to the rescue, acting as the second drive. Provided the software contains no copy protection, then all you need is to use the 'COPY' command from MSDOS to copy from 'A:' (physical disk drive) to 'C:' (RAM disk drive). eg:
A:> COPY A:*.EXE C: <ret>, then replace the source disk in A: with the target disk in the same drive. Again use the 'COPY' command to copy from 'C:' drive to 'A:'. eg:
A:> COPY C:*.EXE A: <ret>. This completes the transfer process.

2. You may use drive A: as your program drive, and use drive C: to store your data or document files, later transfering them to a data disk in drive A: using the process described above. Or reverse the procedure by loading your program into C:, then replacing the program disk in A: with your data disk. (This second method only works if the program is not copy protected).

3. Accessing programs or data from RAM disk is much faster than physical disks.

4. Transferring programs or data to and from RAM disk can be automated with BATCH files. Please refer to your DOS Manual.

WARNING: Please remember to back up your data from the RAM disk to a 3.5″ disk before switching the computer off. When power is off, all information on the RAM disk is lost forever!

RAY LO
Computer Support Manager

TEXT EDIT (Note Pad)

Continued from previous page

Documents can be produced by the Note Pad selection from the desk function. It contains commands for insertion, deletion and exchange characters. The document can be saved to disk or printed via printer, or if you wish, it can also be patched onto a spreadsheet. Note Pad is primarily designed to generate short notes or memos.

There is another way to perform text editing though, and that's by using the cells from the main spreadsheet. It can handle documents of a much larger size and the extra commands such as cut, paste and copy can be utilised. Instructions on how this is done are not given in the product pre-release manual, but I would hope the later revision will explain it in full detail.

INFORMATION MANAGER

This facility is offered within the spreadsheet environment. The rows are set up for records and the columns for fields. Information such as name, address, phone number, etc. can be entered and stored in one part of the spreadsheet, as text data, and an inquiry region is then set up in another part of the spreadsheet to locate information from the main storage area. This technique is somewhat similar to LOTUS 1. 2. 3. There is also a 'Sort' command in the spreadsheet which allows column sort in either ascending or descending order.

To all T1100 Owners!

Please forward the ACCESS FOUR software registration card to Software Supplies to ensure delivery of the updated manual.

NEW PRODUCTS

MICROSOFT PC PAINTBRUSH

by Danny Zarb-Technical Support

Anyone who has longed for the perfect graphics program need look no longer. The new Microsoft PC Paintbrush has everything you could want in a graphics program.

Paintbrush is extremely easy to use, and can be controlled by mouse, joystick or keyboard. The program runs in FULL COLOUR and takes full advantage of the high resolution graphics which the Olivetti personal computer can provide.

With the Paintbrush program the commands are provided through pop-up menus, which are broken down into categories. To select the category you require, move the cursor to the option you want and use the enter command (this may be the return key or the buttons on the mouse controllers).

With the release of the PC Paintbrush, graphics programming is almost non existent. The displays or screens that you create can be saved and recalled later. You can even create a slide show using all the screen you have made. This program is certainly the way to go if you have an IBM or compatible machine.

SOON TO RELEASED

Viatel Decoder

With the introduction of a decoder suitable for connection to Telecom Australia's VIATEL videotex service, DSE are moving into the expanding information market.

Directories and Information Services are opening up a whole new era in communications which enables not only business but also home users to access information and services at the touch of a button.

We believe that the decoder, which is extremely competitive, will finally bring these valuable services to the householder. Services which have to date, been available mainly to business users. Apart from the huge array of information available on VIATEL, with everything from stock exchange reports to video games, banking transactions can now be carried out on the service and soon more will be added.

Via the Mailbox facility messages can be passed from one Viatel user to another, this facility can be both time and money saving and can also be used to order goods or make reservations. As it expands it is invisaged that the entire week's shopping could be carried out through Viatel.

DSE are extremely excited about the decoder and believes it will considerably lessen the workload of the householder and business user. The Viatel service is relatively inexpensive to maintain and with the introduction of a decoder at this low price DSE is keeping everyone informed.

Catalogue No. X-9700
Price $499

Electronic Shopping with DSE

The age of hi-tech is perhaps creeping up faster than we realise. DSE, joining in the spirit of technology, now has 250 pages on the Viatel serivce.

The on line service, through Cable Shop, means that people can call up the DSE catalogue on their home computer or Videotex terminal and make purchase through their bank/credit card without moving from their chair.

At present DSE have 20 pages and this number will increase very rapidly and it is envisaged that all the 250 pages they've contracted will be filled in a short time.

The Viatel service is an inexpensive information and trading service through the phone lines. You hook your computer to the service and immediately have thousands of pages of information at your disposal.

Not only that, but you can bank or shop through the service. This means calling up the DSE catalogue on your computer, finding an item you want, and without moving from your chair you can pay and have it forwarded the next day.

This fast and efficient service may well be the beginning of the end of the weekly shopping nightmare. As Paul Beaver of DSE Computer Support said "Now there is a huge benefit in owning the home computer."

When the entire 250 pages are filled it will not only present DSE's catalogue but also specials, data and enthusiast's information. And remember there's no charge to call up these pages.

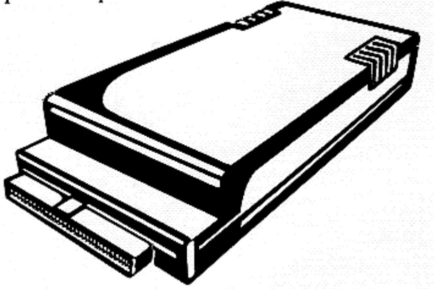
VZ SERIAL TERMINAL

DSE's Research and Development team has developed a low cost Serial Terminal kit (K-6317) for the popular VZ-200/300 computers. The kit allows you to connect a modem to your VZ and from then on you're ready to talk to the world.

When plugged into a VZ series computer, the serial interface provides all hardware and software necessary to emulate a simple 300 baud terminal with full or half duplex operation. It also has a printer echo option to record the conversartion.

This is the cheapest way to get a 300 baud glass terminal going and extends the capability of the VZ-200 and VZ-300 considerably. It will undoubtedly increase the demand for the already popular VZ-300 and with over 30,000 VZ-200 users in the market place there'll be a lot of talking going on.

The kit is relatively simple to assemble and because the PC board is designed to fit into a VZ expansion case a professional finish can be easily obtained. The device incorporates facilities to set serial data format, add an optional auto line feed on carriage return, and all communications can be dumped to a parallel printer if one is connected.



GLOSSARY OF COMPUTER TERMS

ALPHANUMERIC CHARACTERS — Those characters on the keyboard which are either letters or numbers.

BACKUP — The process by which you obtain a spare copy of the disk or tape you are using. This is a necessary, daily procedure, as disks and tapes are fragile, and damaging one could destroy a great deal of information.

BASIC — A language used for entering programs into the computer. The letters stand for Beginners' All Purpose Symbolic Instruction Code.

BAUD RATE — The speed of transmission of data from a serial port along a serial communications line. It is measured in "baud", roughly the same as bits per second.

BINARY CODE —The mathematical code used by the computer for receiving, transmitting, manipulating and storing all data and programs.

BIT —The smallest piece of data that can be stored or sent.

BOOTING or BOOTSTRAPPING — The act of loading the first program into a computer after turning it on.

BROWNOUT — A drop in the voltage supply going to the computer through the mains.

BYTE — The amount of memory needed to store a single character of data. One byte consists of eight bits.

CARD — A printed circuit board which can be inserted or plugged into the expansion unit of your computer.

CHARACTER — Each item entered into the stored text or data using the keyboard. A character can be alphanumeric, a punctuation mark, symbol (# & ' * $ etc) or even the space between words.

CHIP —A chip of silicon with an integrated circuit on it.

COMMAND — An instruction you give to the computer when you are running a program. The instruction to print a file, for example, is a command.

CONFIGURATION — The arrangement and electrical link-up of the hardware that comprises the computer system.

CONTROLLER — A dedicated or specialised "slave" computer that takes over the detailed housekeeping for the disk drives in response to broad commands from the disk operating system (DOS) in the main computer.

CURSOR — The small flashing rectangular light that appears on the screen to indicate where the next character you enter via the keyboard will appear.

DAISY CHAIN CABLE — A cable which links a series of identical units. In this case the daisy chain cable is used to link the disk drives to the expansion unit.

DAISY WHEEL or PRINT WHEEL — This is a device inside a printer which operates to print out characters in the same way as the golf ball on a typewriter.

DATA — The information you enter into a computer. This data is "saved" or filed on disks, used as the basis for calculations, or formatted and printed.

DATA DISK — If you are using 2 disk drives for running a program on your computer, one of the disks is normally used for storing the program and it is called the "SYSTEM DISK". This disk generally has no new material written on it. The other disk generally has no new material written on it. The other disk is normally used to store the data you are going to enter (be it records of daily transactions or additions to your inventory list). This is called the "Data Disk".

DEDICATED COMPUTER — A small processor (generally a silicon chip nowadays) designed to run on one program and carry out a particular function. If you liken the ordinary computer to a pianola, capable of using many different rolls (or programs), the dedicated computer is more like a music box — playing only one tune.

DELETE — The function that erases material from memory or a disk.

DIP SWITCHES — A tiny bank of switches that plugs into a circuit board like an integrated circuit or "chip".

DIRECTORY — A list of the files on a given disk.

DISK — This is a circular disk, similar to a 45rpm record. Information is recorded on its surface magnetically and it is used for storing data or programs for your computer.

DISK DRIVE — This is the machine used for recording (or "WRITING") data or programs on to a disk and replaying (or "READING") the information back again.

DOS or DISK OPERATING SYSTEM — The control program which exists on the system disk, is loaded into main memory and subsequently allows the main computer to instruct the disk controller when disk functions are required.

HARDWARE — The machinery or equipment used to make up the computer.

INTERFACE — See PORT.

MEMORY —The part of a computer's hardware which is used to store data and programs.

MODE — An aspect or kind of operation. EDIT mode, when used in word processing, for example, is that aspect of operation that allows you to change text in a file.

MODEM — A piece of equipment for sending binary codes over telephone lines, thus allowing computers to send and receive information on the telephone. The name stands for MOdulator/DEModulator. The modulator translates the binary code into whistles which can be transmitted over the phone and the demodulator translates the whistles back into binary code.

Glossary of Terms

Continued from previous page

OPERATING SYSTEM — A series of programs fixed in the computer which instructs it on how to carry out its day to day operations. For example, the procedure for transferring data from memory to the printer is programmed into the operating system.

OVERWRITE — The act of recording over (and therefore replacing) information on a disk or tape.

PERIPHERALS — Those pieces of equipment that are "attachments" to the main unit of the computer. Printers and disk drives are peripherals.

PORT or INTERFACE — This is the socket and circuitry allowing the connection of a peripheral to the CPU or expansion unit. Ports can be parallel or serial depending on the way the electric impulses carrying data and programs are transported along the cable to the port.

PROGRAMS — The sets of instructions that tell the computer what to do in order to perform the function you require of it.

RAM — Temporary memory that is accessible to the user for storing data or programs.

READ — The computer's act of "playing back" data or programs contained in memory or on disks or tapes.

RIBBON CABLE — A type of multi-wire cable named for its ribbon—like shape. The wires are embedded side by side in a plastic sheath.

ROM — Permanent memory in the computer, used for housing programs like the operating system.

"SLAVE" COMPUTER — A dedicated computer which is part of a larger system and is controlled by a general purpose computer.

SPIKE — A surge of extra voltage to the computer through the electrical mains.

STRING — A set of characters in a particular, significant order. A word, for example, is a string.

WRITE — The computer's act of recording data or programs in memory or on to a disk or tape.

WRITE PROTECT NOTCH or SENSING NOTCH — A small notch on a disk which, when covered with a "WRITE PROTECT TAB",will prevent the computer from recording or writing over data already on the disk.

TOSHIBA T1100 A PERSONAL VIEW

by Paul Beaver

There is an old joke going around about the electronics company that was so successful at making smaller and smaller computers, eventually they had to move into a smaller factory. I know it is not much of a joke but I think that I have just seen the computer that they could make at their new factory. It is the new Toshiba T1100 lap computer.

The Toshiba T1100 adds a new meaning to just how personal a personal computer can be. To get an idea how small the Toshiba is all you have to do is to pick up the Sydney yellow pages telephone book, the T1100 is smaller! How do you fit it all into one small package? The screen is held in a cover that flips up when you wish to use the system and folds down to cover the keyboard when you are carrying the system around. In spite of its size the Toshiba gives you all the power of a full size Personal Computer. It uses the MS-DOS operating system and is capable of running all the popular software available for the IBM PC (more on this later).

The system comes complete with 256K bytes of RAM, a 80 × 25 character liquid crystal display in the flip up lid and a full sized QWERTY keyboard. There are two separate keypads above the main keyboard, on the left are ten function keys, on the right a sixteen key numeric pad with the same cursor control keys as used by the IBM and its compatibles.

In addition there is a 3.5" 720K floppy disk drive tucked away in the right hand side of the unit. A second external disk drive is an option and is connected to a socket on the rear of the system. The second drive can be either another 3.5" drive giving you a total of 1.4 Megabytes of storage or a 5.25" drive that will allow you to up or download to a disk that can be used in the "standard" size floppies. This gives you the best of both worlds, you can take advantage of the high capacity of the smaller size and still be able to download to the larger (though smaller capacity) disks.

As a matter of interest the smaller disk format is becoming very popular. Almost all the current crop of portables now use the smaller format, even IBM have opted for 3.5" drives for its Japanese manufactured JX. Obviously this popularity should cause an increased availability of software in the smaller format.

The Toshiba also comes complete with a Centronics type parallel port and even has both composite and RGB output, just in case you prefer a monitor to the inbuilt display.

Aside from the smaller size of both the computer and the disks the Toshiba performs just like any MS-DOS machine. The only thing that I can say about it is that it is nice! Its small size, long battery life (about 8 hours on a full charge), and general quality make it more what I feel a computer should be. It is there when you need it but is not intrusive. The Toshiba T-1100 is a really personal computer!

T1100
TAKE IT ANYWHERE!
Good morning
Hello
To the office.
To the park for lunch.

ADVENTURERS' CORNER

This is a new section of Comput magazine that will be used for customers (or stores???) to send in their questions and answers concerning certain problems in certain adventure games, whether that are programs we sell or otherwise.
I will start with the following popularly asked questions, hopefully the list will build up as time goes on.

ZORK.

Q. How do you pick up the platinum bar?

KINGS QUEST

Q. What is the name of the old gnome who gives the key?

HITCHIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY.

Q. How do you get the babel fish from the dispenser?

If anyone can help, please let us know by contacting Paul Jones on (02) 888 3200

YOUR HANDY PHONE LIST

Dick Smith Electronics	(02) 888 3200
DSE Bulletin Board	(02) 887 2276
Computer Hotline	(02) 888 2002
DSX Toll Free Orderline	(008) 22 6610
DSX Direct Bankcard Orderline	(02) 888 2105

USERS GROUPS

CHALLENGER USER GROUP.

Mr. Tom Koltai
74 Karrijong Cres.,
NIGHTCLIFF 5792 NT
Phone: 089 855555

CHALLENGER USER GROUP

Meetings 2nd Tuesday of each month.
Standards House, 80 Arthur St, North Sydney, at 6.45 PM for further enquiries Phone: Ian Onslow 419 2955 (BH)

VARIOUS GROUPS

Cat Users — 1st Saturday each month
System 80 Users — 2nd Saturday each month.
Special interest and learning groups — 3rd Saturday each month.
Challenger/Olivetti/T1100 Users — 4th Saturday each month.

Address: 1120 Botany Rd Botany
NSW (behind Patersons
Florist)
Contact: Mick Rowney Ph: 666 4716

VZ200 CLUB.

Mr. A Rowberry
34 Rogopai Street
PALMERSTON NORTH
NEW ZEALAND

VZ 200/300 USER GROUP.

T. D'Alton
39 Agnes Street,
TOOWONG 4066
Phone: 07 3713707

BONDWELL USER GROUP

Bondwell Users of Australia Inc.

This group offers its 650 members a wide range of facilities and benefits. Membership fee for 12 months is $30 (Aust.) or $60 (Overseas).

If you wish to become a member of BUA, send to this address for an application form, or contact Neville Howard on (03) 363 6011 (a.h.):

Bondwell Users Of Australia Inc.
P.O. Box 599,
Werribee 3030
Australia

BONDWELL USER GROUP

Ray Richards
7/39 Ross Street
Parramatta 2150
683 3940 (h) 689 5278 (w)
Anyone interested in joining please contact the above for details

WANTED: NAMES OF VZ200/300 USER GROUPS IN NSW.

In the last issue of Comput we listed user groups for the VZ200/300, we now find that some of these groups have disbanded, if you have a user group formed in New South Wales, please contact:

The Editor, Comput,
C/- DSE
P.O. Box 321,
NORTH RYDE NSW 2113

QUESTION TIME.

Can you use a VZ200 16K memory pack on the VZ300?
Regrettably no! But all other peripherals may be used on the VZ300 e.g. Disk Drive, Printer interface, joysticks etc.

Can you use a modem on the VZ300?
Great news!! We now have a Serial Terminal for the VZ series of computers. The terminal is in kit form and for more details refer to page 3 of this newsletter, for further information I recommend the August edition of Electronics Today International.

Does the Toshiba T1100 have colour?
Yes, the T1100 does have colour. At the back of the computer there is an RGB monitor port, plugging a monitor into this will give you full colour on the external screen.

Can you expand the CAT computer's memory?
Yes! DSE will soon be stocking a 128K RAM board, which will then allow an even greater range of software. Our CAT is growing!

All questions to be forwarded to:-
The Editor,
COMPUT
P.O. Box 321,
NORTH RYDE 2113 NSW

DICK SMITH ELECTRONICS PTY LTD

60 stores around Australia and New Zealand

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STOP PRESS

Four new VZ Games disks available each disk has four games.

Available Now

$39.95

Contact your local store for details

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